

33 THINGS TO HELP YOU IN AN EARTHQUAKE

Seventy million people in 39 states are at high risk from earthquakes. People in all states, however, are at some risk. Approximately 1,000 earthquakes occur in Washington State every year. While there is little we can do to avoid earthquakes, there is much we can do to prepare for them. Here a few things you can do before, during, and after an earthquake.

BEFORE

1. Get together with the members of your household and put together a disaster plan.
2. Assemble disaster supplies and store them in an easy to-get to location.
3. Identify safe spots and danger zones in each room.
4. Consider buying earthquake insurance.
5. Know how to shut off all utilities.
6. Ensure your house is firmly anchored to its foundation.
7. Anchor overhead lighting fixtures.
8. Store breakable items on low shelves or in cabinets that can fasten shut.
9. Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
10. Fasten shelves to walls. Brace high and top-heavy objects.
11. Repair defective electrical wiring, leaky gas and inflexible utility connections.
12. Securely fasten water heaters and gas appliances.
13. Anchor wood burning stoves to the floor.
14. Secure stovepipe to the flue exit and securely fasten stovepipe segments together.

DURING

1. If indoors — take cover under sturdy furniture or against an inside wall, and hold on, “Drop, Cover and Hold.” Stay away from the kitchen!
2. If outdoors — stay there. Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
3. If outdoors near tall buildings — step inside a doorway, drop down, and cover your head and shoulders to protect yourself from falling glass and other debris.
4. In a high-rise building — take cover under sturdy furniture away from windows and outside walls.

Stay in the building on the same floor. An evacuation may not be necessary. Wait for instructions from safety personnel. Do not use elevators.

5. In a vehicle — stop as quickly as safety permits, and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, or utility wires.

AFTER

1. Check yourself and other for injuries.
2. Prepare for after shocks.
3. Wear sturdy shoes to prevent injury.
4. Use flashlights or battery powered lanterns if the power is out.
5. If you smell gas or hear a hissing sound - open a window, leave the building, and shut off the main gas valve outside.
6. If water pipes are damaged — shut off the water supply at the main valve.
7. Check your home for structural damage to include the chimney.
8. Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, and flammable liquids.
9. Visually inspect utility lines and appliances for damage.
10. Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are intact.
11. Open cabinets cautiously. Beware of objects that can fall off shelves.
12. Use the phone only to report a life-threatening emergency.
13. Listen to the radio for the latest emergency information.
14. Stay off the streets and avoid damaged areas, unless you have been asked to help by proper authority.

For additional information on preparedness, contact your local office of emergency management, or your local chapter of the American Red Cross.